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Intensity

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Intensity – rejection –

rejection – r resistance

There is nobody between you and me, he said, just a ghost from the past. But this is fine, she is invisible, so it doesn't matter.

I caught a ghost-man in a photograph once.

Each time I go to Athens, I take the underground from the airport to Acropolis. I come out and check how many people are sitting in the open-air restaurants, cafes and bars opposite to the entrance of the station. This is like using a barometer. I want to make sure that there is at least a certain number of people and that they are equally distributed. Sometimes they have been less than I wanted. Then I cross the pedestrian street and go to the opposite side to see the Parthenon and start to take photos. I always arrive at night, just before midnight because the direct Easyjet flight from Edinburgh reaches Athens in the evening. At the beginning my Android phone was taking very bad photos, blurred and dull, but somehow it gradually learnt how to deal with the darkness and the quality of the photos improved. This is how I caught the ghost-man in one of them. He looked like a warrior, but I'm not sure from which historical period. He was a bit Medieval, central European, nothing to do with Greece and Athens. A ghost-man who got lost. I have lost this photo.

You get on my nerves though, he said, more than this woman from the past.

This city used to get on my nerves. Too dirty, not dirty enough. Too new, not new enough. Too old, old enough. Too hot, too cold, too noisy, tired enough. Too many shades of grey. It never occurred to me to think about the city as a body, this would have helped. This idea came to my mind only recently, and it was when I agreed to make a project for an exhibition in a different city.

I usually stay in Athens about a week. I walk constantly, day and night, until my feet bleed, up and down, back and forth on the same routes, alone, and take photos, hundreds of them, mostly during the night. At the beginning, I didn't know how to include the full moon, it messed up the photos, but I have now perfected the technique. If I take any photos during the day, these are photos of worn out posters. But I love the challenge to capture the intensity of graffiti under low lighting conditions during the night. I never know if I am going to succeed or not, always using my phone, although I often drag with me my SLR, but never use it.

One night I was in a very dark side street, there was hardly any graffiti there. The darkness and the silence were giving me a certain sense of comfort. Then a rock band started to play. It became a little apocalyptic. I was taken but couldn't locate where the sound was coming from exactly. I went around the block many times. There was no graffiti, there was nothing to take photos of. I tried to capture the building, where I thought the band was rehearsing. I have a series of black rectangulars, which I have now saved in one of my many harddrives.

I need to have someone to share the stories of my personal life, he said, so that I can be reminded about them later, because I forget everything.

I take photos of places instead, I said. I look at them later and remember how I was feeling at the time. I don't know what will happen if I print them all out and cover the walls of my flat, I added.

I bought you a bracelet, he said. I am going to post it to you. Don't wear it in the shower, it is made from wood of nutmeg.

I wondered what would have happened if I pierced my finger with a needle and let drops of blood fall on the beads, then spread it over them, as if it was a layer of paint. How would this affect the smell of nutmeg?

I'm going, I said. I am not wanted.

You rejected me last night, he replied.

I now have a new project. I need to unpack the concept of rejection. Rejection – resistance. It might take years.

Silence. I am breathing normally.

The city is now on fire (again), especially this particular neighbourhood. I never managed to rent a flat in this area.

I am waiting.

When the shutters of the shops are down during the night, they look like eye lids. The city is sleeping. When I close my eyes I see strange shapes. If I stay like this for a while and concentrate, I start to see scenes. Sometimes I worry that I damage my eyes when I do this.

The shutters of the shops are covered in graffiti. When they are down during the night, we can finally see the full version of a single graphic novel unfolding through the city. I noticed there was a lot of breakage and discontinuity last time I walked in the dark streets of Athens. There were bits which had collapsed and others that had been reinforced with many new layers of paint, meaning and vibration. Images come and go, in and out of focus. There is something underneath, there was something else yesterday, there is rupture in the surface, discontinuity of time, there is a sense of fading out, there is a sense of stubbornness. Is it possible to have a soft explosion? How would this be like?

I am worried but feel very alive. In a good way.

Another form of resistance. - r

I invite you all to come and check the background image on the desktop of my laptop. I have a blurred and very pixelated image of the Edinburgh Castle. I created it through processing an original photo I had of Acropolis from the back. I have now lost the file of this processed photo. Does anybody know how I can access and save this background image of my desktop?

I said this because I care about you, he said. Really. And she cares about you too. I don't believe you, I replied, and closed my eyes to see the truth, then removed myself from that story.